

REMARKS

Applicant notes that the certified copy of the Japanese priority document has not yet been filed. Applicant will satisfy this requirement in due course.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the application.

The outstanding Examiner's Action indicates that Claims 3, 4, 6 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, independent Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claims 2 and 3. Dependent Claim 4 has been rewritten to incorporate the limitations of independent Claim 1 and dependent Claim 2. Claim 6 depends from Claim 4 as it has been rewritten above in allowable condition. Claim 9 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claim 11 and intervening Claim 10. In view of the amendments above, Claims 2, 3, 10 and 11 have been canceled above.


Dependent Claim 5 has been amended to make it depend from allowable Claim 1. Dependent Claim 18 has been amended to make it depend from allowable Claim 9. In addition, applicant has added new Claims 19 and 20. New Claim 19 corresponds to Claim 7 but depends from allowable independent Claim 4. New Claim 20 corresponds to the subject matter of original dependent Claim 8, but depends from new Claim 19. As all of the dependent claims ultimately refer back to independent Claim 1, independent Claim 4 or independent Claim 9 as amended above which are in allowable condition, the remaining dependent claims are also in allowable condition.

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In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and allowance of the application. If the reviewing party has any questions regarding the above, he is invited to call applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the below date.

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12/28/04

Shannon H. H.

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